

- 1 DEC 1953

MEMORANDUM FOR: Acting Deputy Director (Administration)

SUBJECT: Airplane Travel

REFERENCE: Memorandum from Acting DD/A to Acting Personnel Director dated 24 November 1953, same subject

1. With reference to the proposal for the utilization of tourist class or air coach for airplane travel, this Office believes there are several considerations which should be brought to your attention before establishing this practice.

a. The Agency's policy of providing first-class travel accommodations is in conformance with laws and regulations applicable to travel of all Government personnel. The employee, as a representative of his Government, is granted minimum first-class travel, if possible; otherwise, he is entitled to receive the next best accommodations available.

b. Although tickets for second-class travel are less expensive, some of the potential savings may be offset by employee expenditures. The free baggage allowance is 22 pounds less for air coach travel than that provided for first-class accommodations with the result that costs saved by the Government in providing second-class travel may have to be assumed partially by the traveler. To the extent that an employee would be required to assume additional costs resulting from second-class travel, there appears to be an obligation upon the part of the Government to alleviate this burden by a higher per diem allowance if he travels second-class.

c. Air coach and tourist class facilities are often inferior to those provided for first-class air travel. Among these disadvantages are the following:

(1) airplane seats are normally closer together on the coaches, and the number of passengers carried by air coaches are appreciably larger;

(2) sleeping berths are not available in second-class travel;

(3) the maximum baggage permitted on air coaches without additional charge is less than that permitted for first-class accommodations.

d. Second-class overseas and continental flights oftentimes entail greater delay than first-class travel. This problem is encountered mainly in overseas flights since many carriers schedule trips for only certain days of the week.

e. Another related scheduling problem is the timing of air coach flights. Many domestic flights are scheduled at night or at odd times when planes are available.

f. Operational requirements may necessitate employee travel without delay. In such cases, a determination would have to be made whether first-class accommodations are justified in the event that air coach vacancies are unavailable. Handling these exceptions would be administratively difficult. The problem of arranging for second-class travel would be particularly difficult during the tourist season.

g. The impact of this proposal on employee morale is a major consideration. In view of the accepted practice of providing first-class travel, the directed use of any inferior accommodations might be construed by Agency personnel as placing them in a second-class status and as denying them a statutory right. Since some travelers would probably be forced to travel on Government business at a personal loss, it may be assumed that such personnel would regard this condition with disfavor. Obviously, poorer scheduling and accommodations would have adverse effects.

h. Difficulties are often encountered in getting employees to travel by air. Second-class travel would further complicate arrangements for passage, since many employees believe that second-class accommodations are less safe or convenient for themselves and their dependents.

2. In view of these considerations, this Office believes that first-class travel accommodations should be provided Agency personnel as a matter of policy.

  
Acting Personnel Director

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